

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this Application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 remain pending in the present Application. Claims 1-6 and 8-9 have been amended. As the amended claims are coextensive in subject matter to the original field of search and place the Application in better form for appeal, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner enter the response on the record. No new matter has been added.

By way of summary, the Official Action presents the following issue: Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (e) as being anticipated by Agraharam et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,956,482, hereinafter Agraharam).

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Official Action has rejected Claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Agraharam. The Official Action states Agraharam discloses the invention as recited in the Applicant's claims. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Amended Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a service providing apparatus including:

“reception means for receiving a group request to include a user in one of the plurality of groups, the request selecting a respective one of the plurality of groups, and for receiving a content request transmitted from any of the information processing apparatuses belonging to one of the plurality of groups . . .; and

communication means for transmitting the data acquired by said acquisition means simultaneously to those of the information processing apparatuses accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group.”

The service providing apparatus recited in amended Claim 1 provides storage for a plurality of groups and content that may be transmitted to members of a same group upon request from a single user of the group. The service providing apparatus allows remote users to assemble

into a same group and readily communicate with each other using the shared server to transmit both text based data and content such as music.

Applicant's invention provides a service providing apparatus functioning as a shared server allowing users belonging to the same group to readily communicate both text and data such as music. A user accesses the shared server, selects one of a plurality of groups stored on the server, requests information, and then the service providing apparatus delivers the requested information to each user belonging to the same group.<sup>1</sup>

In an exemplary embodiment of the Applicant's invention, at least two users access the same group of the shared server. One of the users selects data such as a song from a database on the shared server. The selected song is then communicated to all users belonging to the same group accessing the shared server. While the selected song is communicated to all the users belonging to the same group, the users may communicate by transmitting text using the service providing apparatus. As shown Figures 1 and 5, each client computer (3-1 to 3-3) is connected to the shared server, and is capable of requesting data such as music that is transmitted to each of the client computers (3-1 to 3-3) belonging to the same group. Further, as demonstrated by the non-limiting illustrations of Figures 10 and 11, the service providing apparatus allows users to share the requested data as well as discuss the data while the data is being transmitted.

Conversely, Agraharam, describes a client-server architecture in which a principal user will access a server where desired multimedia information is stored. A user requests delivery of desired information; selects when the information is delivered; provides the identification information for every recipient of the information, and then the server will retrieve the information to be delivered; establish a connection with each recipient; and finally deliver the information.

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<sup>1</sup> Applicant's specification at least at page 13, line 18 to page 14, line 11.

As shown more specifically in FIG 2,<sup>2</sup> A client (210) places a call to a server (250) where desired multimedia information is stored; selects information on the server (250) to be delivered; inputs the telephone number of the other users (270 or 280) who should receive the information, and then the server (250) via the bridging apparatus (260) connects to the other users (270 or 280) and finally delivers the selected information to the other users (270 or 280).<sup>3</sup> Further, as shown in FIG. 3<sup>4</sup>, if the principle user requests information to be delivered simultaneously to more than one user, the multimedia servers (140) waits for a bridging apparatus (170) to establish a connection with each of the users and then transmits the information. The principle user in Agraharam must always provide who receives the requested information and input the contact information of every recipient.

Agraharam does not disclose or suggest the service providing apparatus as recited in amended Claim 1 that functions to store a plurality of groups and content, receives requests including the selection of a group, and communicates requested information to the information apparatuses belonging to the selected group. More specifically, Agraharam does not disclose “storing a plurality of groups and content,” “receiving a request to include a user in one of the plurality of groups, the request selecting a respective one of the plurality of groups,” or “transmitting the data acquired by said acquisition means simultaneously to those of the information processing apparatuses accessing the shared server and belonging to a same group.” Further, Agraharam does not disclose allowing user belonging to the same group to transmit text while the selected data such as a song is being transmitted to all the users belonging to the selected group.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

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<sup>2</sup> Agraharam at FIG. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Agraharam at column 5, lines 37-55.

<sup>4</sup> Agraharam at FIG. 3.

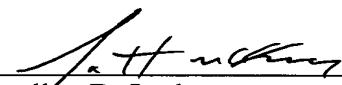
Independent Claims 4-6 and 8-9 recite substantially similar limitations regarding the selection of one of the plurality of groups and information communicated to the information apparatuses belonging to the selected group discussed above with reference to Claim 1, and therefore are allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1. Likewise, dependent Claims 2-3 and 7 are allowable based at least on their dependent recitation of the above identified limitations.

CONCLUSION

Consequently, in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present Application, including Claims 1-9, is patentably distinguished over the prior art, in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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